

HEROES AND VILLAINS ENTERTAINMENT



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of 5



BUSHIDO

THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR



ROB LEVIN | JESSADA SUTTHI

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*Imperial Palace
Underground Tunnels*

GENKI INFORMED ME THE SHOGUN WOULD LISTEN TO MY "STORY" ABOUT THE MONSTERS THAT ATTACKED OROCHI'S WEDDING.

EVEN IF HE HAD CHANGED HIS MIND ABOUT MY GUILT, I WAS UNSURE MY BROTHER EVER WOULD.

GENKI ---
HOW MANY GUARDS
DID YOU STATION
HERE?

FOUR.



SHOGUN!

I DRAW
BREATH AS
EASILY AS I
DRAW MY
KATANA.

I
ALLOWED
DEATH TO
ENTER...

I HAVE
DOOMED US
ALL.

WHO DID
THIS TO
YOU?

YOU MUST GO.
THEY WILL BE
LONG GONE BY
NOW.

THESE
WOUNDS WILL
HEAL. GENKI
AND I WILL GET
HELP.

I HAD NO
IDEA WHAT THEY
WERE CAPABLE
OF.

THEY ARE
NOT MEN. THEY
ARE NOT EVEN
MONSTERS.

THEY ARE
A SICKNESS,
SPREADING
THROUGH ALL
OF US.

HE TOOK HER,
KICHIRO. HE TOOK
MY DAUGHTER.

WHO
DID?



WELL DONE,
OROCHI. RAVEN
WAS RIGHT ABOUT
YOU.




WHY DON'T
WE LET THE
GIRLS PLAY
WHILE YOU AND
I TALK.

RAVEN,
BE A DEAR
AND KEEP OUR
GUEST
COMPANY.



OROCHI,
PLEASE! THIS ISN'T
WHO YOU ARE. DON'T
DO THIS.



IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I STOOD IN
YOUR SHOES. THE BODY CHANGES FASTER
THAN THE MIND. SOON YOU WILL FEEL...
WHOLE IS REALLY THE BEST WAY
TO DESCRIBE IT.

YOU STOP
FIGHTING YOUR
TRUE NATURE. THE
BARRIERS BETWEEN
WHAT YOU'VE WANTED
AND WHAT YOU WILL
HAVE FALL AWAY.
YOU BECOME...
PERFECT.

DOES THAT
SOUND LIKE
SOMETHING
YOU WANT,
OROCHI?

YOU'RE NOT HUMAN ANYMORE, OROCHI. AND YOU'RE NOT SAMURAI. IT'S TIME TO DIVORCE YOURSELF OF THEIR NOTIONS OF HONOR AND MORALITY.

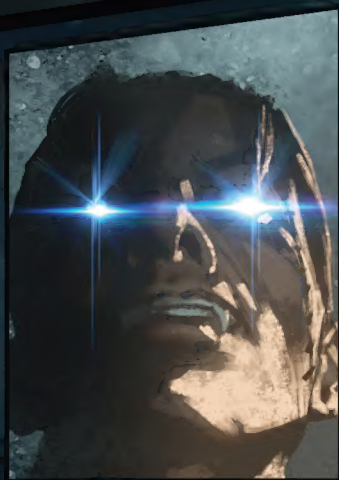
I LIVE BY ONE RULE: IF I CAN TAKE IT, IT'S MINE.

YOU'VE SERVED YOUR PURPOSE.

I TRADE THE GIRL FOR THE SHOGUN AND THIS ISLAND BELONGS TO ME. TELL ME WHY I SHOULD LET YOU LIVE.

I'VE WALKED THIS EARTH LONGER THAN ANY MAN YOU'VE EVER MET. MY SACRIFICES HAVE ALLOWED MY PEOPLE TO PROSPER.

EVEN COMMON MEN WANT TO SURVIVE, OROCHI. SHOW ME YOU DESERVE MORE.







I UNDERESTIMATED YOUR PEOPLE, OROCHI. I HAD NO IDEA HOW FORMIDABLE SAMURAI COULD BE. HOW STRONG THEIR RESOLVE.

WE CAME HERE THINKING A SUBTLE APPROACH WOULD BE MOST EFFECTIVE. RAVEN WOULD KILL THE SHOGUN--AND THAT WOULD BE THAT.

AS YOU KNOW, THINGS WENT AWRY. WE'VE KEPT OUR ENGAGEMENTS SMALL. OUR MESSAGE HAS BEEN... UNCLEAR.



P-PLEASE STOP.

IT'S TIME YOUR FATHER KNEW EXACTLY WHAT I WILL DO TO ENSURE THE PROSPERITY OF MY PEOPLE.

I ALREADY HAVE SOMETHING DEAR TO HIM. PERHAPS HE'D LIKE A BIT OF IT BACK.



WE HAD AN ARRANGEMENT. SHE IS MINE TO DO WITH AS I PLEASE, AND SHE WILL NOT BE HARMED.

VERY WELL...



THERE ARE PLENTY OF OTHER WAYS TO SEND A MESSAGE.





WHAT I AM ABOUT TO ASK, I COULD NOT ASK OF JUST ANY MAN.

NOR COULD I ASK IT OF JUST ANY SAMURAI.



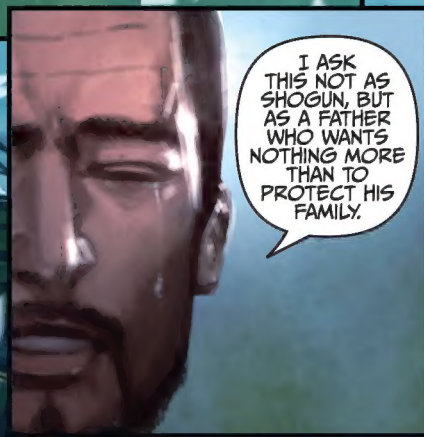
YOU HAVE EACH BEEN CHOSEN SPECIFICALLY FOR YOUR LOYALTY, YOUR SKILL AND YOUR HONOR.

NIPPON IS UNDER SIEGE. ATTACKED REPEATEDLY BY AN ENEMY WHO WISHES TO INFECT OUR MINDS AND DESTROY WHAT OUR ANCESTORS HAVE BUILT.

I ASK YOU, HUMBLLY, TO DO ME A GREAT SERVICE.



PLEASE BRING MY DAUGHTER BACK TO ME. IT BRINGS ME SHAME THAT I CANNOT ACCOMPANY YOU, AND TO KNOW OUR PEOPLE HAVE ALREADY LOST SO MUCH IN RECENT DAYS.



I ASK THIS NOT AS SHOGUN, BUT AS A FATHER WHO WANTS NOTHING MORE THAN TO PROTECT HIS FAMILY.



HAI!



YOU
HONOR
ME.



I AM
IN YOUR
DEBT.



I CAN HELP. I'VE FACED
THESE AKUMA MORE
THAN ONCE. AND...

I BELIEVE YOU
KNOW HOW I FEEL
ABOUT MITSUKO.

THESE ARE THE
BRAVEST WARRIORS
IN ALL NIPPON. THESE
ARE *SAMURAI*.

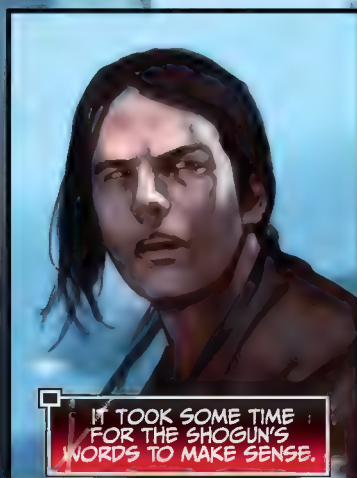
YOU DO UNDERSTAND THIS
THREAT, AND YOU HAVE DISPLAYED
COURAGE AND LOYALTY, KICHIRO.



YET YOU
ARE NOT
SAMURAI.



I SEE NO
REASON WHY
YOU CANNOT
BE.



IT TOOK SOME TIME
FOR THE SHOGUN'S
WORDS TO MAKE SENSE.



I HAD
GENKI FETCH
THIS BEFORE HE
GATHERED THE
OTHERS.

IT
WAS YOUR
FATHER'S...

THE PRICE OF MY DREAM WAS
THE DEATH OF MY FATHER.



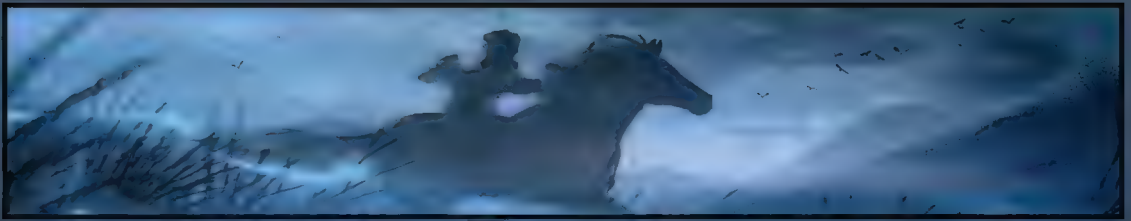
YOU ARE MORE
LIKE HIM THAN YOUR
BROTHER. A TRUE
STUDENT OF THE
WAY.

AND
JUST LIKE HIM,
NOW YOU ARE
SAMURAI.



IF NOTHING ELSE, I
WOULD HONOR HIS
MEMORY -- AS A MAN,
AND AS A WARRIOR.

AND I WOULD GRANT
HIS DYING WISH, NO
MATTER THE COST.



I HAVE A MESSAGE FOR THE SHOGUN.

TURN BACK, CHILD. THE SHOGUN HAS MORE PRESSING MATTERS TO ATTEND TO.



BUT...



P-PLEASE... THEY TOLD ME EVERYTHING WOULD BE ALL RIGHT...



THE GUARDS WERE BARELY ABLE TO EXPLAIN WHAT THEY HAD WITNESSED OUTSIDE THE PALACE GATES, SO OVERWHELMED WERE THEY BY THE HORRIFIC WAY IN WHICH THE BOY DIED.

I KNOW THE MEDALLION WAS MEANT AS A MESSAGE FOR THE SHOGUN. INSTEAD IT POINTED ME RIGHT AT OUR ENEMIES.

THE BOY ARRIVED ON HORSEBACK AT DAWN-- THE MONSTERS HAD TO BE CLOSE. THE MOUNTAINS NEAR FUJIMORI PASS WERE FILLED WITH CAVES THAT WOULD KEEP THEM SAFE FROM THE SUN.



THEY WOULD NOT BE SAFE FROM ME.

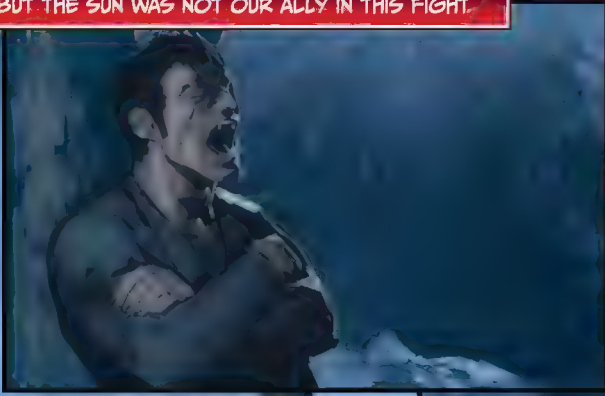


I HAD NO IDEA IF MITSUKO WAS ALIVE OR DEAD, BUT I VOWED TO BRING HER HOME ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.

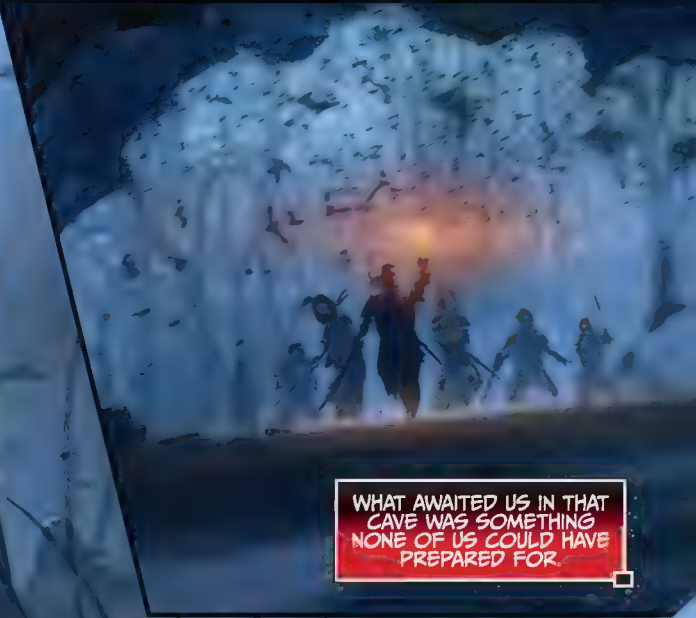
I HOPED DOING SO WOULD NOT MEAN KILLING MY BROTHER IN THE PROCESS.



WE RODE AS FAST AS OUR STEEDS COULD GALLOP TO MAKE FUJIMORI BEFORE NIGHTFALL, BUT THE SUN WAS NOT OUR ALLY IN THIS FIGHT.



WE MUST PRESS FORWARD. DO NOT LET THEM MOUNT A DEFENSE.



WHAT AWAITED US IN THAT CAVE WAS SOMETHING NONE OF US COULD HAVE PREPARED FOR.

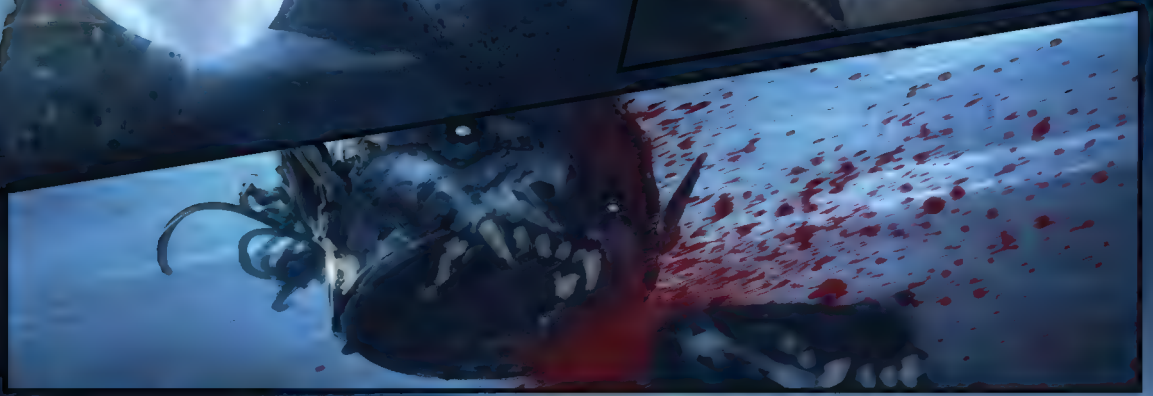


THE MONSTERS CAME IN
TWO FORMS: THOSE THAT
LOOKED LIKE US...

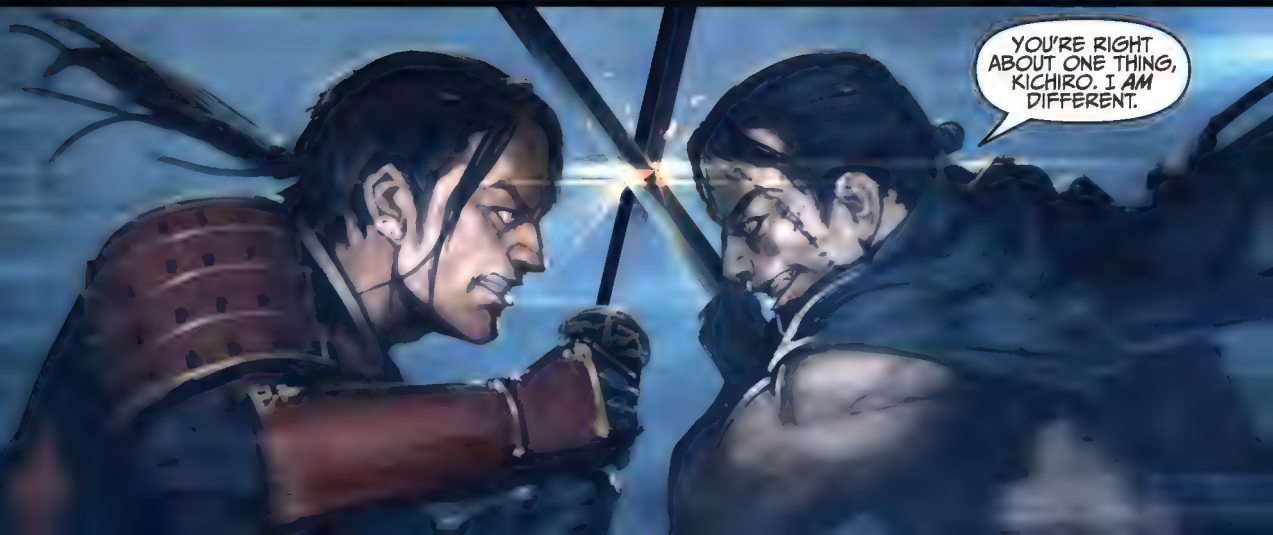
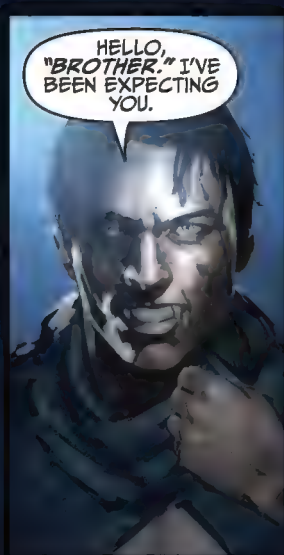
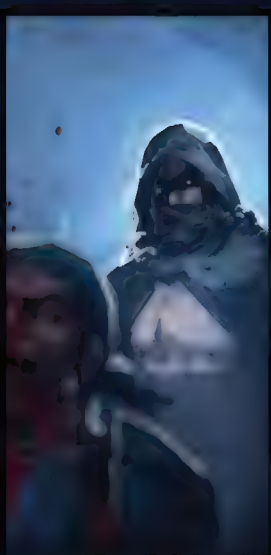
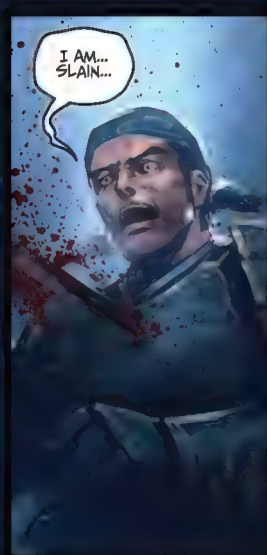
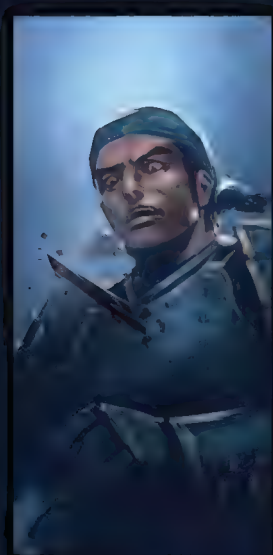
...AND SOMETHING ELSE. ONE
THAT SHOWED NO TRACES
OF HUMANITY IN ITS VISAGE
OR BEHAVIOR.

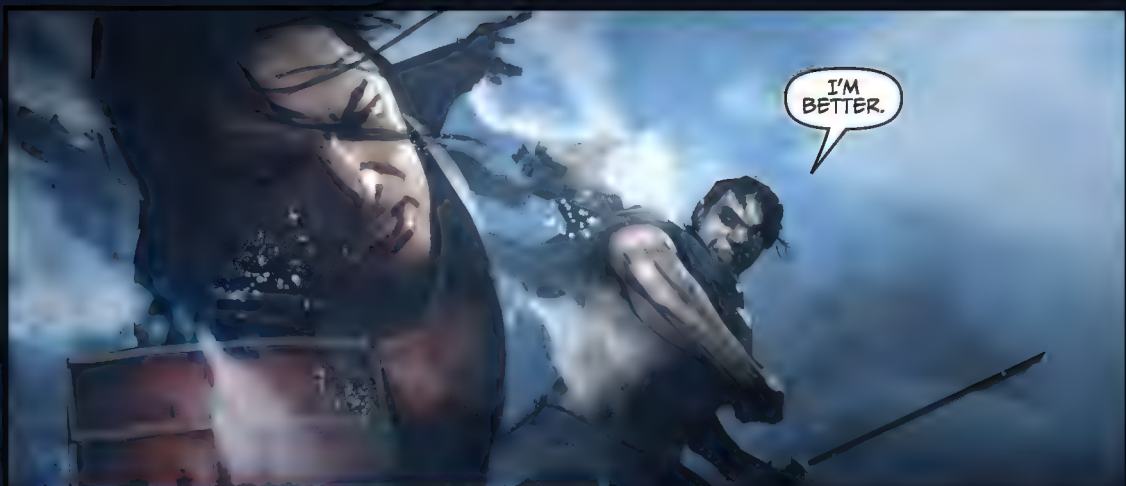
ATTACK!





KICHIRO.
I TH--



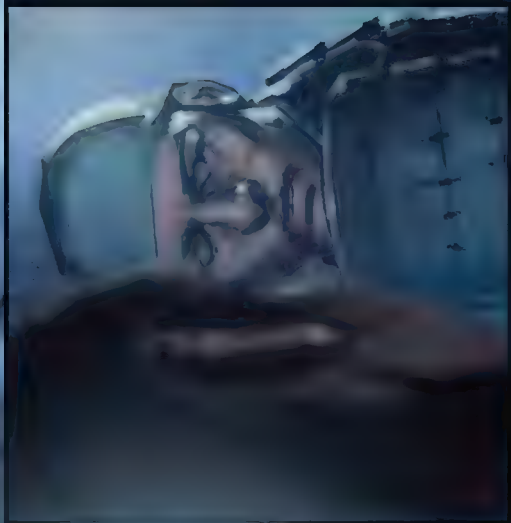


I'M
BETTER.



NO MATTER
HOW HARD YOU
TRIED, YOU NEVER
MEASURED UP. AND
NOW YOU NEVER
WILL.

YOU'RE
TOO LATE.



YOU SHOULD TAKE
COMFORT KNOWING YOUR
DEATH WILL BE BRING ME
SUSTENANCE.

AT LAST, YOUR
PATHETIC LIFE WILL
FINALLY HAVE A
PURPOSE.



YOU DON'T
DESERVE TO WIELD
MY FATHER'S
BLADE.



YOU DIDN'T
DESERVE
HIM.



YOU DON'T REMEMBER, DO
YOU? THE FIRST THING HE
TAUGHT US WHEN I
ARRIVED IN EDO.

"NO AMOUNT OF SKILL,
NOR ACCOLADES IN
BATTLE..."

...CAN FILL THE HEART OF A SAMURAI. HE IS GUIDED AND SUSTAINED BY *BUSHIDO* AND ITS PRINCIPLES.

A LIFE OF *RECTITUDE* IS A JUST ONE, AND *LOYALTY* WILL KEEP HIM ON THE PATH.

YOU TWO ARE BROTHERS, BOUND BY FATE. STAY LOYAL TO EACH OTHER...



"...AND LET NOTHING TEAR YOU APART."

FORGIVE ME, BROTHER, I HAVE DONE SUCH TERRIBLE THINGS. THERE IS A *DEMON* IN MY BLOOD.

YOU'RE WRONG, OROCHI. I KNOW THERE IS STILL GOOD IN YOU.

YOU CAN HELP US. LET'S START BY FINDING MITSUKO.

I DO NOT KNOW HOW LONG I CAN KEEP THE ONI AT BAY. AND YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, MITSUKO IS ALREADY GONE. THEY ARE ALL GONE.

BROTHER, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

YOU DID NOT COME HERE BY ACCIDENT. YOU WERE *INVITED*, TO DRAW YOU AWAY FROM EDO.

THEY ARE HEADED TO THE PALACE NOW. THEY MEAN TO TRADE HER FOR THE SHOGUN...



"...AND ALL OF
NIPPON WILL
BE DAMNED."



TO BE CONCLUDED!

